

DR. HANS HÖRMANN

(1902 - 1981)



Because of his interest in mosses, we Degeners visited Dr. and Mrs. Hörmann in their 1964 home in Exenbach and in their 1972 home in St. Georgen, both in Austria. We were so impressed by Dr. Hörmann's ability, accomplishments and industry, though condemned to working from a wheelchair, that Bryologist Douglas R. Smith joined us in publishing a tribute to him and Mrs. Hörmann in our "Flora Hawaiiana" Sept. 20, 1980. From this we repeat slightly modified excerpts:

Hans Hörmann was born May 7, 1902 in Friedersbach, Waldviertel, Austria. In 1907 the family settled in nearby Waldhausen, where his father was a teacher and later Principal of the local school. For his higher education the son attended the Gymnasium in Linz from 1914 until his graduation in 1922. Thereafter he attended a private school in the same city until 1925. He was then enrolled in the University of Graz until 1930, studying the Natural Sciences and especially Botany. He married Paula Marchsteiner in 1929. While still a graduate student he contracted poliomyelitis in 1930, just before receiving his doctorate. That malady changed his entire future.

Dr. Hörmann lost his salaried University position after three months of illness; but whenever townspeople in Graz met him, they still called him "Herr Professor". His resourceful wife Paula thereafter provided for their total support as teacher and later as Principal. During the Second World War, Dr. Hörmann was evacuated from Graz to his mother's home in Waldhausen to escape the bombing; while Mrs. Hörmann remained in Graz to continue earning their livelihood.

In 1945 he was able to renew his researches on mosses, his illustrations being of high quality and showing details for identification. Because of the ease of handling the diminutive specimens at his small work table, Dr. Hörmann has been able to study a wide range of bryophytes, many sent from the Hawaiian Islands. In fact, he was the main expert who helped us publish ten pages dealing chiefly with a synoptic key of the "Mosses of Hawaii" in March 31, 1973 to supersede the excellent but aged one by E.B. Bartram in 1933. We have additional manuscript about Hawaiian mosses which we plan to publish in collaboration with our late friend. The bulk, however, of his publications have been based on specimens sent him by scientists in other parts of the World. He became recipient of the Kosmos Medal.

At the age of 78 he wrote us in 1980 that his eyesight no longer permitted his work at the microscope, and that his strength had waned to the point where he was no longer able to work on his beloved plants. Thus ended a career in bryology that spanned a half century. We shortly received the sad news from Mrs. Hörmann that her husband had died May 20, 1981, and had been interred in the family grave in St. Georgen, Ybbsfeld, Austria.

Otto & Isa Degener, and Douglas R. Smith.

A NEW SPECIES OF PROSOPANCHE (HYDNORACEAE) FROM COSTA RICA.

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The family Hydnoraceae contains two genera: Hydnora with 6-10 species in the Afro-Madagascan region, and Prosopanche with two southern South American species recently monographed (Cocucci, 1965): P. americana (R.Br.) Baillon and P. bonacinae Spegazzini. The latter genus has been considered as extratropical in the New World, with a doubtful record from eastern Peru (Harms, 1935). But the geographical distribution of the New World Hydnoraceae is amplified by the finding of a Costa Rican, rainforest inhabiting species here described as:

Prosopanche costaricensis Gómez & Gómez-L.

P. americanae affinis a qua imprimis differt statura minore, characteribus seminum, forma et dimensione synandrium.

Herba perenne, hypogea, holoparasitica, erecta, stolonifera; radices (4)-5-gona (sect. transv.) dense rudimenta haustoriorum emittens. Flores ascendentes pedicellus cum ovario 15-20 cm longus; synandrium elliptico-conicum 19-26 mm longum 11-15 mm latum; stigmata 3-radiata pauciter lobulata, lamellae \pm 12-plicatae; semina 1-1.2 mm longae testis ruguloso-verrucosis.

Holotypus: Finca La Lola, callejón sección 18, Siquirres, Limón, 50 m, Gómez 7335, CR. Isotypes: BM, US, F, MO, USJ. Paratype: L.C. González in Gómez-L. 6770 CR.

Plant hypogean, parasitic on roots of Leguminosae. Pilot roots (4)-5-angular with numerous haustorial rudiments on the aristae. Stem massive, nodose. Leaves or bracts absent. Flowers in clumps, emergent, tubular, pedicellate, pedicel 5-(8.9)-11 cm long, 10-16 mm in diameter. Corolla tepaline, 3-merous, tepals 2.4-3.6 cm wide, 3.2-5.6 cm long, anthesis valvate, with tepals joined by their apices so as to form a lantern-like structure. Synandrium elliptic-conical or ovoid, 19-(21.78)-26 mm long, 11-(12.52)-15.7 mm wide at the middle, white when young, dark brown to almost black when mature. Perigonial tube narrow, inner diameter 10-15 mm, short (less than 1 cm). Stigmatic surface button-like, 3-radiate, the lamellae with no more than 12 folds per side. Ovules much reduced, numerous. Fruit a pseudoberry, peponid, more or less globose, up to 50 mm in diameter when ripe, crowned by the remains of the perigonial tube, dehiscence transversal and irregular, more or less medial. Mature placentae fleshy, white, faintly sweet-scented. Seed small, 1-1.2 mm long, irregular, somewhat elliptic in contour, episperm rugulose-verrucose, black and hard.